

7/2 well-dressed artillerymen. Altogether I was as much pleased with the orderly appearance, as with the judicious situation, of this fort.

The new fort of *Kargyil* is situated on the left bank of the Suru river, immediately above the junction of the *Waká-chu*. It is a square of about sixty yards, with round towers at the angles, and a square tower with a small outwork in the middle of the river-front. This work forms a difficult entrance, and at the same time insures a supply of water. The walls are loopholed throughout, and the garrison can sweep the bridge over the Suru river with deadly effect. The position was admirably chosen, as it completely commands the high-road to and from Kashmir.

The new fort of Drás is similar to those of Lé and Kargyil. It is situated on the left bank of the Drás river, and commands the passage of the valley.

The bridge-head of Khallach is on the right bank of the Indus. It consists of a square loopholed tower, built of large sun-dried bricks, with an inclosure surrounded by a high loopholed wall. The garrison of twelve men is furnished from Lé, and is relieved every three months. This work completely commands all approach to the bridge on each bank of the river.

643 In my opinion, the measures which the maharaja has
177 taken for the maintenance of his power in Ladák are
• 578 judicious and effective. Many people grumble; but the dissatisfaction is principally confined to the upper classes, who have lost all their power; and to the Kashmiri Mahomedans, a despicable race, who are ever wishing for change, and who, if they were under the British to-morrow, would long for the Chinese on the next day. To the lower classes the change of govern-

POSTAL ESTABLISHMENT.

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ment has in some respects been a very decided benefit; 643
 for although they may now pay *directly* a larger amount 651
 than formerly to the state, yet indirectly they pay a 177
 less sum, as there is now only *one* duty throughout the 578 ●
 country, in place of the numerous charges which were
 formerly exacted by all the district *Kahlons* and petty
Gyalpos. They have also the advantage of excellent 177
 roads, which is a benefit duly appreciated by a people 491
 whose principal means of livelihood are derived from 643
 the transport of merchandise. For these good roads, as
 well as for the almost complete extinction of theft, the
Ladákis are indebted to the active zeal of *Zoráwar Sing*
 and his successors. Such are some of the advantages
 which have resulted from the conquest of the country
 by an energetic people.

VI.—POSTAL ESTABLISHMENT.

The postal arrangements throughout *Ladák* are 205
 simple and effective; but the transmission is generally
 slow. The *Goba* of each village is bound to furnish a
 courier to carry the post from his own to the next
 village on the road. Along the high-roads the couriers
 are all horsemen, *Tázampa*,* and the post is carried at
 the rate of from twenty to thirty-five miles a day. The
 former is the usual rate; the latter is the express rate
 when any government business is urgent. Thus letters
 sent from *Kashmir* usually reach *Lé*, a distance of
 220 miles, in ten days; but when the despatch is urgent,
 it generally reaches in six days.

All officers of government make use of the village [648]
 couriers for the conveyance of orders or intelligence; 205

* *rTū-zam-pa*, "horse-bridge."

Gobinath said that someone had asserted having observed Namgyal busying himself in a suspicious manner around this particular wall of the house. The witness, he said, was even a lama from Kalatse. Namgyal now soon learned that his accuser was the lama Dondrub, the man who had for a long time been persecuting Namgyal with slanders and hostile acts, and who had also accused him of bribery and embezzlement of tax money, and the like. This he did as the revenge for the fact that Namgyal had said to him publicly to his face that he was charging the people prices that were far too high for the household ceremonies that he performed: that he lent grain and money at usurious rates of interest, and that he led an immoral life. The lama Dondrub had chanced to meet Namgyal near this house as he was walking by himself, and he believed to have found an opportunity with this to rid himself of an inconvenient observer for awhile, in case his accusations brought Namgyal into jail. It later came to light that the lama had put a sum of money into Gobinath's hand, for which the latter promised "to do the thing right."

In the police prison Namgyal first of all witnessed how Gobinath interrogated in turn four "suspects," and when they did not confess, how he whipped them in the most violent manner, tortured them with thumb screws (167) and other tools in the most pitiless way, in order

167. In Greater Tibet, in the realm of the Dalai Lama, even today the most horrible tortures are applied for the forcing of confessions. Of all the devilish inventions of the torturers we will only mention here, by way of suggestion, the following: thumb screws, whipping, drops of melted sealing wax on the bare parts of the body of the accused. The tortured victim is prevented from sleeping by means of two little iron hooks connected by a string which are hooked into the lower eyelids and the skin of the belly so that the lids are pulled down and cannot be closed. Many kinds of executions are correspondingly cruel.

to wring a confession out of them. In between he would frequently take a swallow from a brandy bottle that was standing by. Namgyal observed how Gobinath suddenly interrupted the torturing of one of his victims when the latter called to him amidst howls that he had something important to communicate. After the tortured man had then whispered something to his torturer the latter freed his victim. In Tibet, too, money loosens bonds.

Beyond the High Himalayas

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735 by. It was only the occasional stranger who offered him any possible
792 opportunity to make a cash profit.

[642] The poverty and ignorance in which the lamas hold the people
● 578 of this region mean that the lamas are supreme in temporal as
522 well as in spiritual matters. There is no revolt, not even any apparent
resentment. Yet people are people the world around; and the Ladakhis show
their resentment in simple, innocuous ways. It is in the form of making
fun of the lamas. And one of the most dramatic ways is in the singing
of a famous Ladakhi folk song.

[291] The women of Gya sang it for me. A dozen or more stood in
line, close together. They were dressed in their conventional long
black wool dresses. Most of them had on the picturesque *perakh*,¹
and the large black wool cappieces that stood out like sails from
their heads. Most of them wore sheepskins over their shoulders—
the skin that serves as a ground covering at night, a protection
against rain by day, and a shield for the carrying of loads on the
back. They were giggling as they started to sing; and the giggles
interfered with the song until at last they finally settled to a
serious rendition. The song is a take-off on a man accused of being
a lama. The man's name is Tashiwangyal, and he is the singer.

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*Don't think I have no father;¹
My father's caste is bright like sandalwood.²
Don't think I have no mother;
I'm like the guitar made out of the reindeer skin.³
Don't think I have no tongue;
I'm like the cord made of the inner skin of the goat.⁴
Don't think I am a lama;
Thang Thang Gyalpo is my lama.^{5*}*

¹A lama is supposed to renounce his father and mother.

²He is, in other words, spotless.

³He's made of proper stuff.

⁴This skin has a fine texture.

⁵He was a very superior man who built a lot of monasteries.

*See page 334.

The Church as Landlord

As the women sang, they bent over until their backs were al-578 •
most parallel to the ground. They shook their fingers at an im-522 •
aginary figure at their feet as if they were scolding. As they 792
pretended to scold, they swayed back and forth. And as they sang
and swayed, their eyes danced with merriment. For now they
were making fun of their lord and master—the one who owns their
souls, their houses, their menfolk, their babies, their fields—the
big rich monastery that sits like a castle on the hill.

In his own family, the Thakur told me that the rule of primogeniture was observed. He, as his father's eldest son, inherited the entire *garhpan*, and his younger brothers – known as *nono* (*No-no*) – were maintained by him as long as they lived with him. He denied that they practised polyandry in his caste (and I accepted his statement with the reservations which I have made earlier on), and assured me that younger brothers only remained at home as long as they did not marry. They did not have access to his wife, he said, and when they had found the girl of their choice, they received a small allotment upon which they had to maintain themselves and their family. Very quickly their descendants became like other landholders of a *jagir khoti*, and had to render services, or pay rent instead, to the Thakur.

Despite his denial that polyandry was practised by the Thakurs, the Wazir was very informative as to how it functioned with others. Each brother, he said, had his own room in the family house, as did the wife too. Occasionally, she lived with the eldest brother, in his room. In winter, when it was cold, in order to save fuel, they all lived in one, heated room, without any privacy. Asked if houses communicated with each other, my informant said that they did not, but that in winter, when the snow lay deep on the ground and the streets were impassable, everyone went from house to house by way of the roofs. There were trap doors above to let oneself in when the main entrance was blocked up in front by snow. Winter lasted eight months, he said.

Asked what the rules were in Lahul for sharing the common wife in a family, Partap Chand said that there were none. All brothers, he assured me, have an equal right to the woman, and access to her is very much a question of tacit and tactful understanding between the men. The old signalling method of leaving hat or beads at the door was definitely not resorted to any longer, and a capable wife was quite able to put the weight of her influence into the balance by distributing her favours equally and fairly. Frequently, one brother remained at home, alone with the wife, while the others went off in turn on trading expeditions. Jealousy did sometimes arise, as was inevitable, and in such cases separation was nearly always the outcome of the situation. The family then had to divide up the property, and became less well off in consequence. For this reason, interest effectively checked the appearance of jealousy, as it was a luxury which could not very well be afforded by the ordinary Lahuli.

Children, "like the fields" as he put it, are the joint property of the house. No distinction is made as to who is the physiological father,

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595 although sometimes he is known. It was true, the Thakur said, that
[851] when a family had no issue, a man from outside was called in in an
[842] attempt to sire a child for them. Such a man was called a *p'horjag* (*P'ho-*
rjag) as in other parts of the Himalayas and in Tibet where the custom
was also followed. It was not particularly well looked upon in Lahul,
and was only rarely resorted to. Monogamous families seemed to fa-
vour it more than polyandrous ones, he added.

595 The care and upbringing of the children were also a joint concern, I
555 was told. It could not be said that any one parent, be it one of the
fathers or the mother, had a more important role to play in this respect
than the others. But of course, when children were very young, the
[854] mother looked after them more than the fathers. Later on, it was per-
haps the brother with the greatest personality who played a prominent
part in the education of the children. On the whole, however, the men
seemed afraid of their sons, believing that if they treated them badly,
they themselves might suffer for it later on in life.

595 Young people often revolted against polyandry, but experience show-
428 ed that it was nevertheless still the best policy to follow. Fathers put
[626] pressure on their boys, when they rose in rebellion against the idea of
sharing a wife, by threatening to withhold handing down the family prop-
erty to them. This was generally quite sufficient to make the young men
change their minds.

595 In conclusion, summing up his views on polyandry, Thakur Partap
Chand said that the system worked pretty smoothly on the whole. There
[598] was little quarrelling and not much jealousy. The reason for which this
[182] matrimonial custom was practised was an economic one: the soil was
poor, the holdings small, and there was little possibility of acquiring
other arable land. Each family had to hang on to what it owned; parti-
tion was strenuously avoided.

601 I obtained a few kinship terms from the informant, but not as many
as I was able to gather, later, in other areas of Tibetan culture. Those
I obtained in Lahul, however, are of interest from a comparative point
of view, because they are more archaic linguistically than those now in
use in Tibet proper and show a persistence of old forms in these remote
western valleys. Grandfather (both father's and mother's father) is *mé-*
me (*Mes-mes*) in Lahul; grand uncles (paternal and maternal grand-
father's brothers), *lamas* (*bLama*), and any old men are also called by
this appellation. Grandmother (mother's and father's mother) is *api*
(*Ap'hyi*), as are also maternal and paternal grand aunts, nuna, known
as *chomos* (*Jo-mo*), and other old women.

164 He told me that he treated the following diseases by Western methods:
venereal (by far the greatest incidence), skin trouble, round worm, epi-
lepsy, hysteria (mostly in women, especially unmarried ones), paraplegia
and hemiplegia (due to syphilis), some cases of leprosy, eye inflamma-
tions due to various causes, ear infections, tuberculosis (which was on
the increase due to winter promiscuity), but no cancer (at least ob-
served). I discussed polyandry with him in conjunction with his re-
marks about the hysteria of unmarried women (who were numerous in
Lahul because of polyandry, he said) and the promiscuity of the winter
dwelling in one room, and he told me that he had had one case of
suicide; it was a *no* (younger brother) he told me, who had put an end
to his life because he was jealous of his brothers sharing the wife with
him. He was thirty seven years old at the time, and there was no doubt
that this jealousy was the actual reason for his fatal nervous affliction.

759 Since Thakur Mangal Chand was easily available in Kyelang, I next
went to see him, on the 5th July 1938. An elderly man of over sixty,
he had for a long time been Lahul's Forest Officer, but in his old age
had turned to medicine and had become quite proficient in it and well
known under his Tibetan name of Tashi Dawa. He told me that Tibetan
medicine was ayurvedic to some extent, since it was the result of a
translation of the Indian texts by Tibetan doctors acting on the orders
of King Srong Tsän Gampo (*Srong-bTsan-sGam-po*) in the 7th century
A.D. Asked if there was much nervous disease in Lahul, he replied
that there was little. Light cases were treated by lama Sönam Tashi
whom I had interviewed earlier on, while serious ones came to him.
There were relatively more women ill in this manner than men, and
hysteria was quite prevalent among them. He could, however, quote
some cases of men, too.

158 Thus there was the case of a lama in Kardang, married polyandrously
to a single, common wife with his two elder brothers. As long as they
were alive, he was very jealous of them, as he wanted the woman all
to himself. He developed a nervous paralysis of the leg which lasted as
long as his brothers lived. They died, however, one after the other, so
that in the end he was left with the wife alone. From that day onwards,
he was cured; his paralysis disappeared and he was able to walk again.

He knew also of another case of an elder brother in the upper part
of the Bhaga valley who was hysterically nervous, as he put it, because
he could not stand the idea of sharing his wife with his younger brothers.
Apparently, everybody in Lahul was not capable of living in polyandry
and adapting himself to this form of matrimony.

It all depends upon how people feel about such things, my informants said. Sometimes, the wife will regulate who, of her many husbands, should be with her; at other times, one of the brothers will do so, not necessarily the eldest, but generally the one with the most personality, the one who has the greatest influence with them all. Again, it is possible for the brothers to agree among themselves as to who shall go with their wife for the night, while it is not excluded that they should all of them have relations with her in the same night. Things can be done discreetly, in the dark, with some item of furniture in front of the bed for greater privacy. But this is not always the case, and often relations between husbands and the wife take place with a lamp lit, and in full view of the others, including the children. Not much clothing, however, is discarded, partly out of modesty, but also because it is cold.

I asked here, too, if signals were ever made use of at the door, should the marriage not be consummated in the common room. This question was usually received with great guffaws of laughter; the very idea seemed to amuse them. No, they said, there were no signals; nobody ever left anything at the door. As far as they knew, it had never been done, either.

To my question as to how, then, did they decide who should sleep with the common wife, one of my informants (at the Od-lan household) looked at me slyly and asked if I were, myself, married. When I answered that I was, he asked whether, then, I decided with my wife that, as let us say seven p.m. tonight, we would have intercourse? Naturally not, and he laughed; well, then it was the same with them. Such things took place tacitly, by implicit understanding, and with tact, not in accordance with a pre-arranged programme.

My investigations as to the possibility of jealousy affecting the relations between the husbands of a polyandrous Ladaki family led to the same results as in Lahul. I was told that nobody could afford to be jealous, that it was a luxury in which those who were rich enough to divide up property in other, less austere environments than theirs, could indulge. The Reverend W. Asboe was of the opinion that the ordinary average Ladaki was "not very passionate" as he put it, and that for this reason, they could not really feel the pangs of jealousy. He attributed this lack of passion to the altitude and to the climate which was so cold, and as proof of his allegation, he said that the Moslems, who elsewhere were so fiery about sexual matters and men's honour in these things, were also devoid of passion in Ladak, and often accepted situations there which they would have violently rebelled against elsewhere. No-

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595 body denied, nevertheless, that jealousy was there, ever-present, under
 578 the surface. All they said was that it is kept in check by the necessity
 152 of the polyandrous system, which in turn is the result of the dearth of
 resources which consequently should themselves be shared in so bleak
 an environment.

844 The education of the children in a polyandrous household was the
 next point which I took up. At birth, I heard, there was no midwifery,
 mothers usually going to the assistance of their daughters and rendering
 them the necessary service. After that, it was the mother who naturally
 854 looked after the baby in its early infancy, often suckling it for a pro-
 1853 tracted period of from one to three years, depending on subsequent
 pregnancies. Sometimes, a woman would be assisted in the care of the
 child by one of her own sisters from outside – either from the house of
 her parents or from the house she had been married into in *bag-ma*.

863 Asked what were the rules of cleanliness taught early to a baby, I
 was told that there were none. Children were left to do absolutely
 whatever they liked in this respect, and put outside the house to play
 in the lanes and fields with other children, without any constraint being
 imposed upon them. Of course, if they dirtied the house, they were
 scolded and driven outside, but beyond that attitude, the mother never
 attempted to control them in such matters at all. (This might actually
 5K account for the extraordinary freedom of Tibetans everywhere within
 123 their cultural area in what concerns evaculatory functions; both men and
 women seem to have no shame at all in performing on the streets in
 public and before everybody's gaze. They will also follow Europeans
 who try to retire in privacy, to see "how they do it" – one of the most
 embarrassing things about field-work in Tibet.)

859 Children take to playing very early in the lanes and fields. They
 make castles of mud and water, and nothing seems to amuse them more
 during their first years. They then go over to more sophisticated games
 such as hockey, riding on sticks, playing at being a family, at cultivating
 the fields with small, imitation hoes, at being bride and bridegroom at
 a wedding festival. Dolls are made for the girls out of rags, and the
 boys go about with little axes made of wood. But they seem to tire of
 such games at times, and often go back to making mud and water pies
 and constructions.

595 It is at this stage that paternal authority makes itself felt. I asked
 855 who was the father who took over control, expecting it to be the eldest,
 as he is regarded as the head of the family. But I was told that this
 was not so, and that it was the father who was the most influential who